EDU 221

Spring 2013

Curriculum Instruction Assessment (CIA)

MI Reflections – Chapters 7, 9, 13, 14

Since all of the chapters came from *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom* the overall theme was clear – integrating MI theory into the school environment and students’ lives. These four chapters shifted the conversation away from the individual classroom, although this was covered, and focused on the role of MI theory school wide. In addition, was a discussion about the potential for a 9th MI, existentialism, resulting in a reflection of the impact the new category could have for individuals, classrooms, and schools. The chapters describe how MI schools and classrooms would be structured. An MI school, as opposed to a “traditional” school model, would include regular instructional sessions that incorporate all of the eight MI’s, as well as having assessment specialists, student-curriculum brokers, and school-community brokers. Moreover, MI schools would emphasize all content areas equally, something many traditional schools, which invest more time and resources in English, Math, and Science, fail to do. MI classrooms would differ to a traditional classroom even on the most seemingly small detail – the layout. The classroom layout of an MI classroom would be organized with each MI in mind, and would also include MI specific activity centers. MI activity centers can be temporary or permanent, they can be topic specific or topic-specific (shifting). The purpose of these activity centers is to provide students with a place to actively engage in the learning, with a hope to ignite in them, their “learning potential” (Armstrong, p109). This is not to say MI theory only has a place in curriculum. In fact, as the author proposes, MI theory can also have valuable implications in terms of its applications using computer technology, to celebrate and explore cultural diversity, and to aid in career counseling.

These four chapters provided me with the “big picture” behind MI theory. Understanding its implications for the whole school environment changes my perception of MI theory. Initially, MI theory just seemed like a beneficial instruction tool, whereas now, it seems more like complete educational model, such as a Montessori school. I am excited by the opportunities such a school presents for students. Given that we all have the potential to develop upon all of the eight MI’s, attending a school where each intelligence is nurtured consistently could have wonderful implications for the individual, and for our society as a whole. I would be very curious to read longitudinal case studies of students who have been through this system.

The discussion about technology really struck a chord with me. While designing my stage 3 unit I have noticed that it has been the technology components which have provided me with ways to meet the needs of the more challenging MI’s (e.g, musical and naturalistic). The comment by the author provides a great explanation for this – computers are “intelligence-neutral mechanisms” (Armstrong, p174), as such, we can use them to tailor to individual needs and interface”(Armstrong, p174) with all MI’s.